Racial Characteristics-1937

Mental

Memphis, Tenn., Com'rcial Appeal
May 30, 1937

# Old Negro Rallies to Aid Of Walking School Teacher

## Saved Columnist From Precipitate Slump In Estimation of His Own Children

By T. H. Alexander

WE HAVE it on reliable authority that no man is a hero to his valet and I can add that no man is a hero to his family. For a good many years I have been in the habit of telling my family of the "hardships" of my early days, how I taught school at an early age and walked four miles to school and four miles home five days of the week for nine months, for $35 per month.

T. H. Alexander

I first told this story some 10 years ago because my children, I found, were fascinated by stories of what I did when I was a boy. All children are like that. This particular story, however, seemed to awaken more than usual interest with them. Baby Sister's eyes grew round with wonder, while the eyes of the Littlest Little Boy grew as big as saucers, to borrow a metaphor of the fairy tale of the troll and the soldier.

In a word, the story simply did not register with them. In a day when everyone gets out an auto to ride a block, they simply could not conceive of a person walking eight miles per day, or 40 miles per week, or 160 miles per month for any purpose, much less $35 per month.

So, after much urging, I gave them additional details. I told how I was 16 years of age when a teacher in a one-room country school in Maury County, Tennessee, left suddenly for Texas.

I received the appointment to finish out the year along with one of those temporary certificates to teach, which means a certificate received without examination. That was one of the terrible mistakes of our early educational system; the temporary certificate brought into our teaching corps thousands of unprepared and inefficient teachers. I must have been pretty terrible in this capacity, a hunk of a boy just past 16, but, in the words of the late great Prof. R. L. Jones of Memphis, "too big for a boy and not quite big enough for a horse." So I became a teacher.

The schoolhouse was a log cabin in a wide place in the road known by the euphonious name of Mount Joy. It is, as I said, four miles from the Old Home Town, but I am coming to that pr sently. The log cabin was a relic of pioneer days, its hand-hewn logs covered with clapboards which, I suspected, had been ripped off on the lower edges to serve as fuel whenever the county school board had forgotten to send coal. The attendance at this school ran from as low as 20 to as high as 60, depending entirely on the agricultural labor needs of the community. In corn gathering time and in cotton picking season the attendance fell off alarmingly. The school hours were, by state law, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and for all I know this barbarous law still exists in the rural sections of Tennessee.

I taught all grades from the primer through the eighth. I must have been the world's worst teacher, though at the monthly Teachers' Institute at the county seat I saw a few who looked as though they might have been worse! This Teachers' Institute was always a thorn in my flesh because it cost 25 cents to ride on the railroad to the county seat and 25 cents to return. And one had to go, else his check would not have been issued to him—he had to go to get his check. This monthly trip took about a dollar of my hard-earned cash each month, even if I resisted temptation and did not buy some new magazines and books.

But if I was a poor teacher, I was a good walker. I became so proficient that I could walk the four miles in ten or 15 minutes less than an hour. Anyone who has walked will recall that four miles per hour is fast walking. When one walks faster, he is almost trotting. Through storm and sleet and rain I walked the eight miles daily until my legs were as knotted with muscles as those of a horse.

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This story was amazing to the Littlest Little Boy who probably has not walked, in his entire life, as far as I walked in one week. For seven years, since he first had infantile paralysis, he has regarded anyone who can walk well as a wonder. He was inclined to regard the whole matter as a fantastic invention, much like a story from Hans Christian Anderson. The Biggest Little Boy has openly scoffed at the story all his life. Only Baby Sister has shown any sympathy for her daddy's walking and teaching ability.

So last Sunday when the family was setting up the usual cry to go on the picnic, or to drive to Alabama or Kentucky to see a movie, or to drive to Wilson Dam or to drive just anywhere in the customary restlessness of the American family, I had a scheme. I proposed that we drive down to the scene of the walking exploits of the paterfamilias and measure the distance by the speedometer of the car. I saw a way to restore myself into the good graces of my family.

As the miles reeled off in the measuring test, I felt myself growing greater in the eyes of the family. The speedometer crept up, mile by mile. One, two, three, four miles. At exactly four and one-half miles we arrived at the location of the school house.

I say location advisedly, because there was no schoolhouse there. Was my face red? But there used to be a schoolhouse there, so I inquired around among the oldest inhabitants. Nobody seemed to remember it. About a hundred yards from the original site was a neat white schoolhouse. The old schoolhouse must have been burned or destroyed by a storm.

We left the spot with mingled feelings. The children were polite about it but my cause was lost. I was not only convicted of a fairy tale but of having claimed to teach in a non-existent schoolhouse.

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A mile down the road there hove in sight a being who can only be described as an African wreck. He was a negro man who tended a little patch by the side of the road whom I used to know in the old days. I have always contended that the old negroes of the south have the longest memories of any human beings. This old man was dressed, for Sunday, in a cutaway coat fully six sizes too large. His shoes must have been relics from the Confederate army. His shirt was a rag. But he bore a wide welcoming grin, as he waved us down from the roadside.

"Effen dis heah aint de walkin' school teacher!" he said. "How is yo', suh? Been 20-25 year since I seed yo'."

I fell upon the neck of this Samaritan. We drank at his well while he told the children tall tales of the past and how their dad for nine months walked past his house at 7:45 in the morning and 4:15 in the afternoon, as regular as clockwork. Here was evidence from as casual witness who bore no self interest in the tale. He added embellishments of his own of how I had whipped the school bully, how all the children of that generation had become marvelous "cipherers," how they could read and spell. He made me out a regular Paul Bunyan.

I was a hero. I anticipate no further trouble in my family. I am the boss—the big shot.

And did I say the old uncle had no selfish interest? He did not—at first. But when I left I slipped into his black hand, in thanks and gratitude, one-seventh of what I earned per month teaching school—a crisp $5 bill.

# RACIAL STUDY SHOWS NO BIRTH EQUALITY

## Mental and Physical Differences Classified in New Data of Psychologist

All men are not born equal. Scientific evidence, long lacking or insufficient, now points to genuine mental differences between races apart from the more superficial superiority that results from advantageous geographic location, proximity to other peoples, and a background of culture or civilization, writes Marjorie Van de Water of Science Service.

It has been natural to suppose that men differ from each other mentally as they do in the more obvious matters of skin color, shape of nose or curliness of hair. But procuring scientific proof of such differences was a stupendous task. The test with which an American child is given an I. Q. rating is obviously not suited to an adult African Bushman. Written tests are automatically barred for the illiterate.

So-called performance tests are almost equally useless. The uncivilized man cannot understand the directions necessary, the pictures are meaningless to him. Even when suitable tests can be devised, comparison between scores of aborigines and city dwellers is meaningless because of the great environmental differences.

A new attack is provided by comparing two primitive peoples, not with civilized man but with each other. Dr. S. D. Porteus, psychologist widely known for his psychological maze tests, has gone to the desert wastes of Central Australia and to the home of the Kalahari Bushmen in South Africa.

Despite better food and water supply and easier living conditions, the Bushmen excelled the environmentally unfavored Australian aborigines in only two respects, Dr. Porteus reports. They offer more determined resistance to white invaders and they are more skillful artistically. The Australians scored about eleven years on mental age tests; the Bushmen rated only between seven and eight years.

Racial Characteristics - 1937

Physical.

# SEASON OF PROBLEMS IS HERE, PASTOR SAYS

## Dr. R. H. McCaslin Speaks On "Life's Mysteries"

## FUTURE, PAST DOMINANT

### Most Fitting Time To Ponder, Consider Origin and Final Destiny, Presbyterian Minister Tells Congregation

Facing the future, with memories of the past, man at this season of the year is confronted with life's greatest problems, Dr. Robert H. McCaslin said yesterday. And these, to which he usually gives the least consideration, deal with his origin, what he is, and his final destiny.

Calling attention to the most worthwhile thing in human existence in his sermon, "Life's Mysteries," yesterday at Second Presbyterian Church, Dr. McCaslin said:

"We are standing upon the mystery and wonder of the unknown, on the brink of the past, on the threshold of the future— It is the gladdest and saddest time in all the year—sad because of the wonder amid the ruins of buried memories and lost opportunities, and shattered dreams, but it is glad because we stand upon the haze and wonder of the golden splendor reaching out into the tomorrows of life, with its opportunities and priviledges.

"It is a most fitting time to thoughtfully ponder life's problems and consider what we shall do with life and its duties in the year that lies ahead of us.

**Mystery Confronts Us**

"We are confronted with mysteries greater than any we have ever solved. Thoughts about life and destiny come in upon us and we pause for consideration in these closing days of the old year. We can do nothing better than to think deeply and seriously concerning them.

"Life's greatest mysteries do not relate to sociological or economic questions. They have nothing to do with dogma or ritual. They are no more American than they are European; they are more important than the questions of human rights and governments. They are vastly more solemn than the decisions as to where we shall live, or how, or what we shall do, or even be.

"These problems are the three greatest questions that have troubled the human mind for all years. Ruskin expressed these questions in language like this: 'Whence came I? Where am I? Whither am I going?'

"In the busy days of our hurried life we do not think seriously enough concerning these mighty mysteries—we are so concerned with the material and the present we do not have time to think of the deeper mysteries that stretch out into all the eternities and that inclose all mankind. It is worth while, therefore, to pause in the midst of life's routine and think of life's business."

# Swapping Morals With Darkies

By BASCOM ANTHONY

I am impressed that the Negroes are getting more like the better grade of white folks used to be and that the white folks are getting more like the Negroes once were. It looks like we are swapping places in our moral and social standards. Here are some of the reasons for this belief.

The darkies once well nigh monopolized the chain gangs, but not so now. As I ride the highways and pass the prisoners at work it looks to me as if the whites were as numerous as the darkies. And this in the face of the fact that while no jury would knowingly send an innocent Negro to the chain gang, it's easier to prove them guilty than it is to convict a white man and especially so since the Negro is not often able to hire a good lawyer. Crimes against persons and property are becoming more common among the whites and especially among the whites of a tender age.

Till of late years the white people were as nice to their women as are the males of the lower animals to their females. In the animal world no male ever fights or seeks to injure the female. Their sex protects them. When the darkies were brought from savagry and put into slavery in this country they were too valuable to be allowed to cripple each other. After freedom came to them and after knives and razors were used for "sociable purposes," their men and women carved each other with great abandon. Once in a great while a white man shot some rival or slew the woman through jealousy. But now such things are so common among us that they attract but little attention.

**Back to Barbarism**

Human nature being what it is this familiarity and coarseness between the sexes today is destructive of reevrence and respect for womanhood and that has always meant death to any civilization so cursed. It ceased to be civilized and became barbaric.

I do not believe half I hear but as I spend a good part of my time in hotels I see and hear a plenty. An intelligent young woman said to me last year, "Brother Anthony, there are not any good women any more." Of course, she was wrong. There are multitudes of good women but she, poor child, was speaking of the crowd she knew best. Recently I attended a Catholic mission and heard a sermon by a priest in which the parents were warned about the dangers to their daughters. He said many of our modern young women carried contraceptives in their hand bags along with their lip stick and powder puffs. He hears more confessions than I do and is in better position to know about these secret matters.

The Negroes once supplied all the prostitutes in towns up to three or four thousand inhabitants. But it's not that way now. They are about put out of business. And that's the main reason why among so many of our men deference for womanhood exhausts itself in pulling off it's hat in an elevator.

**Divorce Increasing**

Almost any male animal goes to the defence of its female and young when attacked by other animals. But when two old hens start fighting they have started something for which they are not equipped and do not know how to finish. The rooster looks like he was disgusted that the hens didn't have sense enough to be themselves and quit trying to ape roosters. It's all as unnatural as a caponized rooster going around singing like a hen and cackling to little biddies.

Until I was about thirty years of age I never saw but one divorced person. Of course the poor darkies fresh from heathenism and slavery took up with each other as convenience dictated and quit at any time they pleased. Such disregard for womanhood was unheard of among decent and civilized whites. But now even United States senators and occupants of the White House and their children take on wives and husbands to be traded in for new ones almost as easily as they trade in their old autos.

I sometimes wonder what the effect would be if a few of our old time Southerners could come back with a pistol in one hand and a horsewhip in the other to express their disapproval of the standards held by their descendants. I can't help but believe we still have enough women of high moral standard in our parent-teachers association to greatly help the situation if they only gave up their fear of the public and spoke their real feelings about our present situation.

**Bad Examples Blamed**

They could at least drive immoral triflers from our school rooms and thus remove some pernicious examples from before the eyes of their children. They could put an end to the corruption of the youth of the land from childhood up by moving pictures made largely by characterless men and women. How can children have sane and moral views when they are taught by the movies that the lunatics and pipe dreams of Hollywood's beauty mad, sex-mad, money-mad actors are true to normal life. You had as well expect to raise a child with a normal mind and character in the frenzied ward of an insane asylum. It's no wonder that many girls are of easy virtue and that youthful criminals predominate in jails and penitentiaries.

I know that children like to use their imaginations and live in a world of make-believe, but they know it's all make-believe. A boy with a stick horse and a cornstalk gun knows they are shams and throws them away when he is done imitating grown folks, but the movies present their mad performances as normal for adult life and thus utterly mislead his mind and character.

Gambling in nearly every form if not licensed is tolerated all over the land. Women and children are among its patrons. Coarse and even brutal forms of diversion once under the man of the law and patronized almost wholly by bums and other disreputables are now the sports of the high-ups and low-downs with their wives and children.

**One Crime for Men Only**

About the only low down crime for which many of our women cannot be justly convicted is the crime of being the father of a family of illegitimate children. In everything else they are doing their best to be low-grade men. I wonder if a fortune could be made selling them something to make hair grow on their chests just as fortunes were made in straightening kinks in the darkies hair. We are getting so much like the darkes used to be maybe that scheme would work.

I believe we still have enough men who honor womanhood and enough women who command our profoundest respect to restore us to normal life but if not, then things must get worse before they get better. One extreme begets the other. We do not seem to have either the intelligence or the character to steer a sane course. We run to extremes which fill even their devotees with disgust and then we swing as far the other way. We are about due for a change. Even savages who fail to clean their camps are driven by their own filth and stench to hunt a new camping ground.

# RACE THEORY - A Religion of Insanity

Manchester Guardian

Dr. Rustern Vambery, formerly Professor of Criminology at Budapest, spoke at Friend's House on Friday at a meeting on the sociological fallacy of the race theory. 4-9-37

Dr. Vambery dealt mainly with the scientific fallacies of the theory, speaking with considerable zest and humour. He said that as applied to human aggregates the word race was almost devoid of biological meaning, but it seemed extremely difficult to remove it from popular use, particularly since certain developments of political theory had tended to admit implications of a psychological and cultural character transcending any biological definition.

The essential point of the so-called racial theory which had been invented by Count Gobineau, a French poet in the fifties of the last century, was the essential superiority of one race and the inferiority of others. It was Professor Max Muller who introduced the unfortunate term Aryan into current usage. He spoke not only of an Aryan language but also of an Aryan race. Thirty years later, convinced of his error, he wrote in his biography of words: "I have declared again and again that when I say Aryans I mean simply those who speak an Aryan language. To me an anthropologist who speaks of Aryan race, Aryan blood, Aryan hair, is as great a sinner as a linguist who speaks of a Dolichocephalic dictionary."

The gist of the race theory, Dr. Vambery said, was that the particular race was chosen by God to create and maintain human civilisation. The proof of this superiority was nothing but the victory on the battlefield. There was no other infallible evidence for the superiority of a race but the moral value derived from success.

Dr. Vambery said in conclusion: "It looks as if Englishmen in their mental attitude really do not recognise the grave peril that threatens them and all civilised mankind from applying wrong methods in the treatment of a social plague. It is perfectly hopeless to argue with violence because the doctrine of violence yields to one argument only, that of greater strength. It is hopelessly vain to enter into negotiations and to conclude agreements with political exponents of the racial theory because, though personally they may be honest—that is, they may be convinced of their rectitude,—according to their particular system of morals mendacity, deception, and fraud are as rightful means to establish, to assert, and to uphold the supposed superiority as violence itself.

"Racial theory may be a creed. Its foundation, however, is not love but hatred, and therefore it is a religion of insanity. It is of no use to argue sense with lunatics. There is but one antidote against the poison of the racial theory—British armaments. This is the only way in which British civilisation and were it not a pleonasm, I should say human civilisation can be saved from the danger of racial megalomaniacs."

Chattanooga, Tenn., Daily Times
May 14, 1937

# AFRICAN TIES CUT, DR. JOHNSON SAYS

## American Negro's Culture His Own, Speaker Holds.

### Hope for Future to Lie in Education, Adaptability, Mission Groups Told.

"There is very little cultural continuity between the African Negro and the American Negro," said Dr. Charles Spurgeon Johnson, author and leader of his race and teacher of sociology at Fisk university, in an address yesterday at the First Christian church, sponsored by the City Federation of Missionary Societies.

"The common temptation is to go back to the African Negro when any attempt at interpreting the Negro is made," said the speaker, "but in reality the link was broken when they were brought to America."

"Less than a half dozen words used by the Negro today have any connection with African tribal dialect. The speech traits, generally supposed to be peculiar to Negro dialect and attributed to the African background of the race, are in reality derived from the speech habits of the early settlers. In some instances they are even traceable to Shakespearean English or that of the Elizabethans," Dr. Johnson explained.

**"Worst Singing Ever Heard."**

"I have spent some time in Africa, and the sound of the Africans singing Negro spirituals, as taught to them by the missionaries, was the worst singing I ever heard," he commented.

"The Negro was never intended as a settler, but as a labor supply, a fact which has caused some of the present-day problems.

"But the Negro has made his adaptation to the economic order in which he has found himself. Instead of losing his zest for living as some races have when broken up and taken from their native surroundings, Negroes have thrived on the change and built up a new order," he said.

"The subject of the Negro family, as a social unit, combines more collateral social problems than any other one topic," stated the Virginia-born speaker. "As a race the Negro is undergoing changes, and every change brings a profound cultural shock."

**Four-Fifths of Race in South.**

"Whereas in 1880, 80 per cent. of the Negro population was rural, now only 56 per cent. is rural, although four-fifths of the population remains in the south."

"This involves adaption from a simple rural economy to the complex and highly technical urban economy.

"The race has changed from a matriarchial to a patriarchial organization. Under the old order the divorce rate was low, but the separation rate high."

"There has been a shift from a personal, intimate relationship engendered by the easy-going life of the plantation, to the abstract and impersonal attitude of the cities. In the old order there was a certain security in being in debt—a slave possibly would be kept for what he might earn to apply on the debt—now it is absolutely imperative to pay debts."

"The hope of the future for the American Negro lies in education, both formal and informal, and in his power of adaptation to his changing circumstance," is the opinion of Dr. Johnson.

B. C. Tipton, from Bonny Oaks, sang a Negro spiritual, playing his own accompaniment.

A. M. Pennybacker, general secretary of the Y. M. C. A., introduced the speaker and named some of his outstanding works, and mentioned his part in the "Preface to Racial Understanding."

**MAN WITH NINETY CHILDREN**

King George left a reputation that will live long in Jones county. It is claimed that when he died ninety people went to his funeral and claimed him as their father. He is remembered as a long, lank, black man, with his chin whiskers wrapped and extending in two little twists down on his chest, somewhat like the picture of a cadaverous sheik. According to the tradition that lingers to this day he did not work and had no occasion to work. He accumulated no property, but lived by and from his popularity with the women of his race. He figured in no court troubles or rows and there was nothing noteworthy about him until it developed that so many Negroes claimed him as father. A Hungarian prince once was credited or accused of living the same kind of life, but King George seems to have held the record in America.

# U. S. WOMEN HIDE COLORED BLOOD BY NAIL POLISH SAYS BRITON

LONDON — Charges that American women paint their fingernails in an attempt to conceal traces of colored blood this week started an angry controversy in the columns of the conservative London Times.

George L. Massy, of Folkestone, started the argument when he wrote to the Times's editor saying that he was "credibly informed that the reasons some ladies stain their fingernails is in order to conceal traces of black blood otherwise discernible there."

An angry retort to Massy was sent to the Times from R. H. Jackson, editor of the publication "Perfumery and Toiletry."

"Nail painting," he wrote, "originated in China 3,000 years ago and has been indulged in ever since by Cleopatra and other fine ladies."

# Races Look Different, But Smell the Same; Scientists Explain

NEW YORK. — (CNA) — The pseudo-scientific claim peddled by race "theoreticians" that Negroes exude an offensive odor, peculiar to themselves, received a resounding swat this week at the hands of the Medical Advisory Board of the Daily Worker.

At Atlanta, Ga., white worker, who had evidently rid himself of this anti-Negro fiction, sent the following inquiry to the Board:

"Can you tell me if there is any difference between the composition of the sweat of a Negro and a white man? I would be grateful if you would give me this information in order to settle an argument. My friend says there is a difference."

The Board, which numbers some of the leading physicians and specialists in this city among its members, replied:

"As we have pointed out many times in the past, science can entirely disprove the statement made by your friend. No difference has ever been shown in the structure, function, and excretion of Negroes and whites.

"For that matter, some time ago we printed an answer to a question from two groups as to whether Negro skins give off a substance which has a particular smell

"The fact is that all skins—black and white—give off the same smell, and the smell may be rancid and offensive if not enough baths are taken. The simple fact is that workers cannot take enough baths, if they have to live in dwellings without bathtubs, showers and running water.

"Millions of workers, white and black, in this rich land not only have no bathrooms, but some even have no toilets and have to use out-houses—all the advertisements of glorified bathrooms in the luxury magazines to the contrary.

"Workers, white or Negro, who have no proper bathing facilities at their factories, also smell after a long day of dirty and hot work."

# Says Southern Accent Came From England; Not Negroid

## Alabama Professor Traces Dixie Drawl to Great Britain; Claims it Does Not Belong to Negroes

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — (CP)—"That southern accent," for many years believed to be the result of Negro influence in pronunciation, had its origin in England and is not Negroid, according to James B. McMillan, professor at the University of Alabama who has recently completed research on the subject.

"Absolutely no evidence of Negro influence on southern pronunciation has been found," McMillan said. Southern dialect, he said, is derived mainly from southern British provincial dialects spoken by people who settled in the deep South.

Such pronunciations as "bile" for "boil," "spile" for "spoil" were standard in England, McMillan said, during the period when Georgia and Alabama were being settled and were brought to this country by English settlers.

The English spoken in the southern part of the United States came from southern England, he claims.

Racial Characteristics - 1937

Physical.

# NOT PURE WHITE

## Nazi View of the English

**From our Berlin Correspondent**

The war of the future will be a racial war, declares Dr. J. Paulsen, a physician and biologist, who in this month's "Germany's Renaissance" makes a remarkable classification of the peoples, in which the English, it would appear, are not really pure white as the Germans are.

Dr. Paulsen, it is gathered, is not greatly impressed with Germany's allies. The Italians, the inheritors of one of the older Mediterranean civilisations, are a very mixed race, while the other treaty partner is Asiatic and yellow. At any rate, Dr. Paulsen regards alliances between people who are not of the same race as transitory. He writes:

> We would do better if, according to geographical standpoints, we were to distinguish three great races in Europe and Africa. Negroes without higher culture and civilisation south of the Sahara, the black race. North of the desert and around the Mediterranean, the brown race. To this race belongs, with the exception of small groups, the Occidental race. It is the holder of a high Mediterranean civilisation and sent its offshoots to England by way of France.
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> North of the Alps and east of France are to be found the peoples who originally gave the white race the name; their best-known representatives are the Nordic peoples.
>
> Through their known vanity, their strong need of assertion, and their unrest the Occidental race was forced to become the supporters of the modern democratic idea. Rome and Greece collapsed after the extinction of the northern racial strata and in their place came a colourful mixture of African, Asiatic, and European peoples.
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> We see the same thing to-day in France. Marseilles has 10,000 mulatto children in its schools. France officially favours the mixture of races and has black members of Parliament and Ministers—a grave danger for all Europe.

### The "Coming War"

Dr. Paulsen adds that, according to the experience of history and biological knowledge, the struggle will therefore remain always between the Occidental and Nordic peoples. Alliances and similar arrangements will never be of long duration. He continues:

> The coming war would be a racial war, therefore much more bloody and exhausting than the last war. England has a very strong mixture of Occidental people which has pressed back the Germanic elements. The Jews, with their great financial power in England and France, must and will be hostile to Germany upon racial grounds.

Therefore, decides Dr. Paulsen, the great question of the future is: "Will a grouping of the States on racial principles come about? Will Germany be the leader of a new era?"